

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, claims 92-101 and 103-108, 111, and 112 have been canceled merely to facilitate allowance. No new matter has been added. Claims 2-19, 26-29, 45-47, and 56-79, 91, and 109-110 were previously canceled. Thus, claims 1, 20-25, 30-44, 48-55, and 80-90, and 102 are currently pending in the application and subject to examination.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 1, 20-25, 30-44, 48-55, 80-90, and 102. The Applicants note that these claims are the only remaining pending claims in the application, following the above amendment, and submit that the application is in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Objection

In the Office Action mailed October 3, 2007, claim 100 is objected to for informalities. The Applicants note that claim 100 has been canceled. Therefore, this objection is moot.

III. Art Rejections

Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), claims 92-101, 103-108, 111 and 112 are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,331,867 to Eberhard et al. ("Eberhard"). It is noted that claims 92-101, 103, 111, and 112 have been canceled. Therefore, the Applicants submit that this rejection is moot and the application is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending patentability distinguish the present invention from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300 with reference to Attorney Docket No. 026880-00008.

Respectfully submitted,

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